



State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Transportation

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Pathway to Building Your Future

Business Opportunities

Doing Business in Illinois

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as a Prime Contractor

Prequalification as a Prime Consultant/
Subconsultant for Architect & Engineering

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Illinois Department
of Transportation

Prequalification as a Prime Consultant/Subconsultant for Architect & Engineering

All architectural/engineering consultants interested in providing services for IDOT, whether as a prime or subconsultant, must be prequalified with IDOT.

IDOT prequalifies architectural/engineering consultants in multiple transportation service categories. Prequalification is based on the firm's and the individual's experience.

Who is eligible to apply?

Engineering consultants that meet the minimum requirements for prequalification in at least one of the 52 work categories are eligible.

What are the benefits?

Once prequalified, consultant engineering firms are eligible to do work for IDOT as a prime consultant.

NOTE: Subconsultants must be prequalified in the applicable category of work.

For more information on prequalification as a prime consultant/subconsultant, visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/desenv/preqcons.html>

Contractors' Market Place

The Contractor's Market Place is an electronic bulletin board that provides an efficient and effective way for prime contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers seeking business with IDOT.

Who is eligible to apply?

- Prime contractors and subcontractors to assist with IDOT projects.
- Subcontractors seeking work from prime contractors.

NOTE: Subcontractors participating on contracts must register with IDOT.

What are the benefits?

The electronic bulletin board provides prime contractors' and subcontractors' skills by providing opportunities to participate in IDOT projects.

For more information on the Contractor's Market Place, visit <http://www.dot.il.gov>



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Construction/Consultant Mentor-Protégé Program

The Construction/Consultant Mentor-Protégé Program centers on business collaborations between mentor firms (prime consultants) and protégé firms (DBE certified socially and economically disadvantaged businesses) to provide developmental assistance to enhance the protégé's business and technical capabilities to do more complex work.

Who is eligible to apply?

- Construction: Any IDOT certified prime contractor (mentor) and certified DBE construction firm (protégé).
- Consultant: Any IDOT certified prime consultants (mentor) and any IDOT certified subconsultant (protégé).

What are the benefits of being a Mentor?

- 5 percent reduction of the DBE goal for the mentored project;
- Build trust and loyalty between the mentor and protégé; and,
- Stronger partnerships are developed to collaborate on future projects.

What are the benefits of being a Protégé?

- Technical, managerial and financial experience gained;
- Opportunities to develop skill sets that can complement or diversify the protégé firm; and,
- Additional mutually agreed upon benefits from mentors including work that flows from a government or commercial contract through subcontracting or teaming arrangements.

For more information on Construction Mentor Protégé Program visit
<http://www.dot.il.gov/obwd/mentor.html>

For more information on the
Consultant Mentor Protégé Program visit
<http://www.dot.il.gov/consultmentor.html>



Working with IDOT

Building your capacity through diversity

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is committed to maintaining the state's transportation infrastructure through a partnership with construction and consulting firms. IDOT is also committed to providing an array of services to assist Illinois businesses succeed in pursuing transportation-related construction and consulting opportunities. IDOT continually strives to ensure that contracts are awarded to qualified businesses and recognizes the importance of maximizing contract participation opportunities for socially and/or economically disadvantaged businesses owners throughout the state.

With this goal in mind, 'Pathway to Building Your Future' was designed to help minority and women-owned firms and businesses navigate the myriad of opportunities, programs and services available to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.



Programs and Processes

IDOT continually seeks qualified and diverse firms to support Illinois transportation programs and offers a wide array of services for firms seeking contract opportunities:

- **Subcontractor Registration:** Firms seeking to provide construction services as a subcontractor must complete an annual registration process. Note: Registered subcontractors are not required to be certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE).
- **DBE Certification:** The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program is a federally mandated program that provides minorities, women and other eligible small businesses an opportunity to participate in highway, transit and airport contracts that are federal and state funded. Firms seeking certification must meet the requirements of 49 CFR Part 26, Subpart D: to ensure that only firms that fully meet this part's eligibility standards are permitted to participate as DBEs
- **Construction/Consultant Prequalification:** A rating process established by IDOT which requires prospective bidders (firms) to obtain a certificate of eligibility prior to being considered for issuance of bidding proposal forms and plans for contracts awarded by IDOT. Firms can be prequalified as a prime contractor, prime consultant, and/or a subconsultant.
- **Mentor/Protégé:** A two year partnership in which a prime contractor (mentor) agrees to work with a protégé (DBE) to provide work experience and/or address matters necessary to enhance the protégé business' success.
- **Illinois Unified Certification Program:** The Illinois Unified Certification Program (IL UCP) is a "one stop shop" certification process for firms seeking Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certification in the State of Illinois. The participating agencies for the IL UCP are IDOT, City of Chicago, CTA, Metra and Pace. Firms certified with one participant are certified with all IL UCP agencies. Certification as a DBE also means you are eligible for contracting opportunities with the other IL UCP agencies.

Doing Business in Illinois

7-Step Plan That Works for You!

1. Select a business structure that works best for your needs. These include sole proprietorship, general and limited partnership, limited liability partnership, a limited liability company, and S and C corporations. Please visit <http://www2.illinois.gov/Business/Pages/businessforms.aspx> to obtain forms for each business structure option.
2. Register the business name with your county clerk.
3. Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service through their online application process. Please visit <http://www.irs.gov/irs/index.html?navmenu=menu3> for more information.
4. Obtain federal tax information for your selected business structure. Please visit <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=109805,00.html> for more information.
5. Register and license your business with the Illinois Department of Revenue. Please visit <http://tax.illinois.gov/Businesses/index.htm> for more information.
6. Find out if your city imposes any additional local taxes by contacting your local revenue department.
7. Obtain a license to practice in your industry if required by the Illinois Division of Financial & Professional Regulation. Please visit the department website at <http://www.idfpr.com/dpr/default.asp> for more info.

Further information on Doing Business with the State of Illinois is available online at http://www.commerce.state.il.us/dceo/Bureau/Entrepreneurship+and+Small+Business/Regulatory+Compliance+Assistance/Step_By_Step1.htm

For business questions, please contact the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Business Information Center at 800/252-2923 or ienconnect@mailmw.custhelp.com.





DBE Program

IDOT certifies firms for participation in the federally mandated Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. The DBE program is intended to provide contracting opportunities to small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Who is eligible to apply?

Firms that are owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals seeking contracts with IDOT and other federally assisted agencies with DBE programs (e.g., the City of Chicago, CTA, Metra and Pace).

What are the benefits?

DBE certification provides small businesses with additional contracting opportunities on transportation related contracts. DBE goals are placed on highway, airport and transit contracts and only businesses certified as DBEs are eligible to meet those contract goals.

For more information on DBE certification, visit <http://www.dot.state.il.us/sbe/sbepwr.html>



Construction-Prequalification as a Prime Contractor

All construction firms interested in performing work as a prime contractor on highway construction projects must first be prequalified by IDOT. Prequalification is based on the firm's financial capability, equipment and experience.

Who is eligible to apply?

All highway construction firms willing to provide highway or construction services to IDOT.

What are the benefits?

The prequalification process enables contractors to bid on IDOT projects as a prime contractor.

For more information on prime contractor prequalification visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/const/prequalapp.html>



Subcontractor Registration

Subcontractors must register annually with IDOT in order to be approved for and participate on IDOT projects.

Prequalified contractors are automatically included on the list of registered firms and are NOT required to register.

Additionally, material suppliers, trucking companies, and companies that provide professional services (i.e. consultants) are NOT included in the definition of subcontractor and are not required to register.

Who is eligible to register?

Any firm or contractor seeking to provide highway or construction services to IDOT can register.

What are the benefits?

Once registered as a subcontractor, you can be approved to perform subcontracting work for a prime contractor on IDOT projects.

For more information on Subcontractor Registration visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/const/subreg.html>





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Target Market Program

IDOT is in the process of assessing/implementing the Illinois statute, 20 ILCS 2705/2705-600, known as the Target Market Program. The program aims to achieve diversity goals and address disparities in contract participation and awards.

Who is eligible to apply?

Qualified minority and women contracting firms.

What are the benefits?

The Target Market Program seeks to provide procurement opportunities for minority and women-owned firms to bid as prime contractors and is aimed to further diversity in the IDOT Construction Program.

For more information on the Target Market Program visit <http://www.dot.il.gov/targetmarket/default.html>

Contact Us

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www.diversity.dot.illinois.gov

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